Appln. No.: 10/620,249

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims in the present

application.

What Is Claimed Is:

1. (previously presented) A storage system, comprising:

one or more slow-access-time-mass-storage nodes, coupled to store data at respective

first ranges of logical block addresses (LBAs);

a plurality of interim-fast-access-time nodes, configured to operate independently of one

another, each interim-fast-access-time node being assigned a respective second range of the

LBAs and coupled to receive data from and provide data to the one or more slow-access-time-

mass-storage nodes having LBAs within the respective second range; and

one or more interface nodes, which are adapted to receive input/output (IO) requests from

host processors directed to specified LBAs and to direct all the IO requests to the interim-fast-

access-time node to which the specified LBAs are assigned;

wherein the interim-fast-access-time nodes are configured to be reassignable to a further

second range of the LBAs.

2 (original) A storage system according to claim 1,

wherein the one or more interface nodes comprise a mapping between the interim-fast-

access-time nodes and the LBAs, and

wherein the one or more interface nodes are adapted to convert the IO requests to one or

more requests and to direct the one or more requests to respective one or more interim-fast-

2

access-time nodes in response to the mapping.

3. (original) A storage system according to claim 2, wherein the mapping comprises a function relating each specific interim-fast-access-time node of the plurality of interim-fast-access-time nodes to the respective second range of the LBAs

4. (original) A storage system according to claim 2, wherein the mapping comprises a table relating each specific interim-fast-access-time node of the plurality of interim-fast-access-time nodes to the respective second range of the LBAs.

5. (original) A storage system according to claim 2,

wherein the data is allocated into groups of data within the one or more slow-access-time-mass-storage nodes according to a pre-defined unit of the storage system comprising an integral number of bytes of the data, and

wherein the mapping comprises a correspondence between the interim-fast-access-time nodes and the groups of data.

6. (original) A storage system according to claim 1, wherein the one or more slow-access-time-mass-storage nodes comprise one or more disks, and wherein the interim-fast-access-time nodes comprise random access memories.

7. (original) A storage system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of interim-fast-access-

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